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SOCIAL FORCES IN THE UNITED STATES.

A NOVEL called "Democracy," very bright and amusing, was published three or four years ago. It describes life in Washington, from the point of view of a person who has little or no faith in democracy as it works in America; and it is so far enlivened by personal sketches, which people try to identify as portraits, that, besides its real merit, it carries with it the charm which belongs to a riddle. "Who is this?" or "When was that?" we are expected to ask,—and we do.

The novel excited its fair share of interest at home, as a bright and witty satire, very well done. But, so far as I observed, it was not considered anywhere a very important book, nor was it reviewed or cited as if it revealed any very important secrets of the political or social life of this country. But I happened to be in England in the summer of 1882. To my surprise, and somewhat to my amusement, I found "Democracy" everywhere. There were several cheap editions. It was largely discussed in the journals. It was often the subject of serious conversation among well informed and thoughtful people. I found myself obliged to recollect, as well as I could, the names of the characters, and to talk over the movement of the story as I might have talked of a critical debate in Parliament, if I had heard one the night before.

The curious fact that a book which had hardly made a ripple in public estimation here made quite a little war there, after two or three years, occupied my attention. I found myself, a dozen times, obliged to make to my English friends some very commonplace statements about American life. I found that those statements were sometimes challenged by people who had never been in the United States, and who, therefore, knew much more of my country than I do, who have lived here sixty years. This is really my reason for asking public attention to some very

familiar observations on social order in America, which I think travelers here are not apt to consider, precisely because they are fundamental. Possibly the journals are not apt to consider them. But, as I suppose, they show not only why "Democracy" is more read in England than in America, but something more. I suppose they show why this country steadily advances in prosperity, happiness, and real success, while, according to the observations most frequently put in print, it would certainly go to destruction in twenty years or less time.

London is the capital of the British empire. If the British empire were governed by such people as "The Ring" of Tweed, Sweeny and Company in New York, it would go at once to destruction. Or, if it were governed by such intrigues as are described in "Democracy" at Washington, it could not long subsist. Now, New York and Washington are called the two capitals of America. In two different senses, they are. Why does not America go to destruction, given such people as Tweed and Sweeny in New York, and granted such intrigue as "Democracy" describes in Washington? This is substantially the question which was put to me, perhaps fifty times in as many days, in England.

It is very difficult to make an Englishman understand the answer. It is much easier to make a Frenchman understand it. De Tocqueville and Laboulaye and Chevalier understood it perfectly. Occasionally, a bright English traveler catches the principle of the answer. Mr. Freeman has caught it, and that charming writer, General William S. Butler, who once walked across North America. But, generally, the Englishman cannot understand, nor believe, that the Edinburghs and Dublins of America are not swallowed up by its one or two Londons. All the same, I shall try to put in print here one or two statements of fact which may perhaps help American travelers when, at some comfortable halting-place in Switzerland, they have to explain to an English friend what will seem to them so absurdly clear as to need no explanation.

The simple truth is, that the United States have no such center of opinion, of fashion, of education, or of politics, as is London. New York is not such a center. Washington is not such a center. On the other hand, the people of the United States do not know, and can hardly be made to understand, how subordinate is the part played in England by what the London

journals condescend to call "the provinces." If Congress governed the United States, as Parliament governs the British empire, the importance which my English friends attached to "Democracy" would be fully justified. In point of fact, as every American reader knows, Congress has charge only of a small part of such responsibilities as fall on Parliament,—perhaps a twentieth part of them. The other nineteen-twentieths belong elsewhere,—perhaps three thousand miles away.

When I was in London, a member of Parliament asked the Government what they were going to do in the case of a school-teacher in Ireland, on whose head, four years before, a black-board had fallen. The proper officer replied. Notice had been given, in advance, of this question. The incident took five or ten minutes of a busy night. It was all in good faith. It was not a bit of obstruction. Imagine a question like that in Washington! Strictly speaking, it ought to make a rebellion, if anybody in Washington presumed to ask what had become of a school-mistress's head in Oregon. Now, because Parliament thus attends to the whole British empire, the proceedings of Parliament are of the very first importance. They are reported at great length in the London papers,—very badly reported, if you will trust an old expert in that business, but still at great length. Four and six large pages of a London newspaper will be given to a single day's session. Now, the comparative unimportance to America of the proceedings of Congress is revealed in the fact that any New York paper is quite satisfied if it give one page to the ordinary record of Congress. Seldom does a report exceed two pages. You shall even see a Monday's paper, in which more space is given to the sermons in the New York pulpits of the day before than to the debates of a crowded day in Washington. This does not mean that the people of New York are specially fond of preaching. It is because the affair at Washington is not specially important to the country. And so indifferent are the Washington papers to reporting the proceedings of Congress, that Congress has to pay the expense of "The Congressional Record" to secure a careful report of its own debates and proceedings.

A striking illustration of the central truth of our system appeared in that long summer when General Garfield lay a-dying. From the 2d of July to the 19th of September there was hardly one subject of such importance as required the personal atten-

tion of the head of the National Administration. The truth is that the country was governed elsewhere. Washington and the President were responsible only for a very small proportion of its government. This is what is meant by "Self-government," if anybody on the other side of the ocean could be made to understand it. But this seems well-nigh impossible.

The English error in this matter is very natural. English readers see few American papers, singularly few American books. A very large class of our most important books is quite unknown in England. The newspapers and journals which they do see are generally those published in New York, and occasionally those published in Boston and in Philadelphia. Naturally enough, though quite erroneously, they suppose that these cities have the same empire over the thought of America as London has over the thought of the British empire. As poor Lord Salisbury said, "they all use very small maps," if, indeed, they use any, and they really think that two or three cities control American life, because all the American literature they see dates from those cities. Now, it happens that two of those three cities which I have named are virtually Irish cities. They are governed by Irishmen, and, indeed, it is probable that a majority of their adult inhabitants are of recent Irish origin. Those cities, therefore, are as badly governed as is everything else which is governed by Irishmen. The English *dilettante* has made up his mind that these cities govern America, and he naturally comes to the conclusion that America must be very badly governed.

In the hope of meeting this delusion if possible, I have taken some pains to find where, in fact, the literary journals of New York find their readers and their support. The figures which I have obtained will show, what everybody in America knows, that though these journals are printed in New York, they are not printed for the Macs and the O's, the Sweenys and Tweeds, who govern New York, but for a very large constituency scattered over all the nation. They are not printed for a few "highly cultivated" people in two or three large cities, but for a great many cultivated people, who live in all parts of the continent. Thus, of the copies of the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW mailed from its office, almost exactly one-quarter part is sent west of the Mississippi River. The mailing-list of another literary journal of very large circulation shows that twenty per cent. of that circulation is in New England, twenty per cent. in the

four Middle States, ten per cent. in the ten Southern States, and fifty per cent. in the region between the Alleghanies and the Pacific. It is true that the mailing-lists are not an absolute criterion. A very large proportion of the circulation of each of these journals does not appear on them, but is cared for by book-sellers and news agents. These dealers, however, number more than five thousand, and are very widely scattered. The proportions, therefore, if made from the whole circulation, would not differ materially from those which I have shown.

I was, ten years ago, the editor of a serious literary journal published in Boston. It received its character from such papers as Dr. Martineau, Dr. Bellows, and Dr. Dewey wrote for it. It had naturally a considerable circulation in New England, because it was published there. But on examining the publisher's correspondence for a single month, I find that, excluding the orders given from New England, as fairly to be called local, thirty per cent. of the remainder were from New York, sixteen per cent. from Pennsylvania, ten per cent. from Illinois, six per cent. from California, as many from the District of Columbia, as many from Minnesota, and the remaining twenty-six per cent. were divided between Iowa, Michigan, Colorado, Wisconsin, Indiana, Maryland, Canada, New Jersey, Washington Territory, Louisiana, Nebraska, Kansas, Nova Scotia, Kentucky, the Hawaiian Islands, and Japan. I have named first the States which took the largest number.

Nor let any person suppose that periodical literature goes into regions that have no other literature. The quality of reading is a very difficult matter to test, but the publishers of the rival editions of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* tell me that a large proportion of the large sales of that costly and thorough book are made to parties who live west of the Mississippi. One house reports to us that, as far as its own sales go, a quarter part of its very large issues have gone into that region. This means that many thousands of the largest and best encyclopedia in the English language are in that country, of which Robert Livingston said in 1804, "I have assured them (in Paris) that we shall not send an emigrant west of the Mississippi in a hundred years."

We all know that life in the smaller cities or towns is more favorable for habits of reading than life in the large cities. And if any one imagine that the reading of such towns is confined to what is called "popular reading," he is very much mistaken. Two

firms of book-sellers in Boston were kind enough to send me their orders received in one day from twelve different towns. The largest and most distant of these was San Francisco, Cal. From that town, in one order on that day, were Greville's Memoirs, Marlowe's Poems, Talleyrand's and Molière's works. The other eleven orders on that particular day called for the following works: 1. Lessing's Works; Wilhelm Meister. 2. Smiles's Self-Help; McCarthy's Nineteenth Century. 3. Philip Brooks's Sermons. 4. Faith and Unfaith; Lessing's Works. 5. Locke's Philosophical Works; Faith and Unfaith. 6. Whately's Logic; History of Switzerland. 7. Light of Asia; Scotch Sermons; Geikie's Life of Christ. 8. Blackie's Lay Sermons; Dean Stanley's Sermons. 9. Geometry and Faith; Ten Great Religions. 10. Darwin's Origin of Species, and other works; Lecky's England; Mediæval History. 11. Graphic Art; Fergusson's Architecture; Palliser's History of Lace; Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors. In each case, I select two or three of the more serious books from each order. The full twelve lists represent perhaps one two-hundredth part of the books which went from Boston that day to the small towns,—and these lists represent perhaps one-tenth part of that two-hundredth.

As to amount of reading, the distribution of the public library of San Francisco is twice that of Boston in proportion to the population. The public library system of the country, again, shows to a certain degree the books the people choose to read.

Here are two orders, received in the same week for two town libraries: 1. Parks and Gardens of the World; Raphael Studies; Michael Angelo; Japanese Ornaments; Chalmers's British Poets; Ruskin's Poems; Edwards's Essays. 2. Freeman's Norman Conquest; Fergusson's Architecture; Anderson's British Poets; Lord Bacon's Works; Morris's Literature of Ancient Greece; Jowett's Plato; Müller's American Art; Symonds's Renaissance. That is one day's supply of two out of three or four thousand libraries.

These figures will do something to show to readers who need enlightenment that though most books are published in the largest cities of America, it by no means follows that it is in those cities that they are read. So far as the use of books is a test of education, it is certain that the educated class of the United States is quite evenly scattered over the whole country.

The very wide distribution of colleges ought to show the same thing. It is convenient for the under-graduates of the

universities on the sea-board to sneer at "fresh-water colleges." But I observe that Yale and Harvard draw some of their best teachers from colleges "which nobody ever heard of," and the point I have now to make is, that there would not be three or four hundred institutions requiring Latin and Greek and some high mathematical training as part of their course, unless there were very widely scattered an educated class which directs society, insisting on the higher education. Apart from the undergraduate nonsense about "fresh-water colleges," the intelligent men of the country know how to respect the endowments and the staff of the University of Wisconsin, the University of Virginia, the University of St. Louis, the University of Michigan, and Cornell University, at Ithaca, as belonging in the same class of institutions as the Johns Hopkins University, Columbia College, Yale College, and Harvard College. The endowments of some of these Western colleges are more than princely. Princes have never made such endowments. And their administration is wise. I do not mean to imply that Montana, Colorado, or even Illinois or Michigan is crowded with people who can discuss Greek accents, or who talk about the last sweet thing relating to quaternions. I speak of the colleges simply to show the drift of feeling in the West, and its readiness to encourage the best cultivation of which people know. You would not have universities, each with four or five millions of endowment, in regions indifferent to the higher education; and you would not have them in regions where men of the higher education were merely exceptional. You only have them in regions where such men are among the leaders of the social order.

Of course, it is difficult to show, by statistics, just where such people are. But it has seemed to me that a good test would be the analysis of the list of Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The members of this institution are all from the United States or the British Dominion. They choose from their own number the Fellows, who are all men engaged in science, or who have materially aided in its advancement. Of these Fellows, there are five hundred and twenty-one. It is interesting to see how they are territorially divided. We have to eliminate, as these gentlemen would themselves say, one or two abnormal factors. First, the officers of the army and navy and of the scientific surveys conducted by the National Government return their addresses as at Wash-

ington, though in fact, in many cases, they spend the active part of the year, perhaps the whole of it, far away. Second, the association was chartered in Massachusetts. It has held more meetings there than in any other State, and the place of meeting, to a certain extent, affects the number of members. Again, the largest university in America is in Massachusetts, and the number of its scientific professors, to a certain extent, enlarges the Massachusetts quota. Allowing for these disturbances, the reader will see that for the country at large the distribution of the Fellows of this scientific society ranges over the Northern, Western, and Pacific States in a ratio curiously near to their population. The Southern States, or their leaders, for their own purposes have chosen to keep well out of any such calculations. Of the five hundred and twenty-one Fellows, ten belong in the British Dominion. Of the remaining five hundred and eleven, ninety-six belong to Massachusetts and fifty-eight to Washington, which are, for the reason I have mentioned, exceptional. There remain three hundred and fifty-seven names, which are divided among the following States in the number indicated: New York, seventy-four; Pennsylvania, thirty-nine; Connecticut, thirty-nine; Ohio, thirty-one; New Jersey, twenty-four; Illinois, seventeen; Missouri, sixteen; Maryland, fifteen; Michigan and Rhode Island, ten each; California and Indiana, eight each; Kentucky, seven; Wisconsin, six; Tennessee, New Hampshire, and Iowa, five each; Virginia, four; Vermont, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Utah, two each; Delaware, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Nebraska, Kansas, Texas, one each. The other States have no Fellows.*

Not to adduce more of such statistics, here is the truth regarding our social order: Where enough people live together, for the growth of the better social institutions, there are enough people of education and refined habit to take the lead of that

* Readers who have no census tables at hand may be interested to compare this list with the order of the same States for population. It is this: New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Iowa, Texas, Tennessee, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Alabama, New Jersey, South Carolina, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, California, Minnesota, West Virginia, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Delaware, Vermont, Rhode Island, Colorado. The number in Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, and Rhode Island has been raised above the average by the presence in these States of Yale College, of Princeton College, of the Johns Hopkins University, and of Brown University.

social order and to lead it well. Good sense and good breeding go to the front, as their very names imply that they will. And to the question why "Democracy" excited so little attention here, the answer is that at least forty other centers thought themselves quite as important as Washington. Good society in Detroit and Columbus and Burlington and Albany, and five hundred other places, had in each case its own interests; if you please, its own gossip and its own scandal. It was far too much interested in its own affairs to distress itself a great deal about the fact that "Democracy" thought ill of people in Washington. It read "Democracy"; but it did not much care that some bright unknown writer who had spent a great deal of life in Europe was soured by what he or she saw in Washington. Had you accosted a person at an evening party in Goshen or Akron, or some other town you never heard of, and asked about the book, he would have said, after he had made sure you did not write it, "I do not think that Washington governs America."

Go to Washington any summer, and see what a hard life the Newspaper Row people have in making up the rigmarole which they call news, which they shall contradict the next day; while all the heads of department are away, leaving one official to telegraph to the acting Vice-President, if by ill-luck the President, at his retreat, should break his neck. Or, stay at home, and consider how days or weeks pass without any allusion to what Washington has to say or do outside the newspapers. People are interested in home affairs, talk about those affairs, and give only a small share of their attention to the subject discussed the day before in Washington. Thus, the question of the quality of sugar which the Government of the nation provided for Bare-bones or Red Cloud, occupied the attention of the critics of the National Administration for some weeks a few years ago. It was exactly as important as the question as to the quality of sugar which the State of Missouri provided for its insane hospitals, or the State of New York for its home for inebriates. It was neither more important nor less. The quantity of supply was probably much less than in either of those cases. Now, the fact that it is discussed at Washington does not deceive the American, used to the American constitutions. True, a Washington correspondent may fill half a column with it in hard stress for material. But the American citizen is not deceived. He does not read the half column. He

does not care much for the discussion. He knows that substantial justice will probably be done, or he hopes so. Any way, he means to attend to the part of the business that belongs to him. If the people at the center botch very badly the part that belongs to them, he will turn them out some day. But he does not make the mistake of thinking that their brown sugar is more important than his brown sugar, because it happens to be bought from the national treasury. This is to say, in a figure, that what are called the affairs of the nation, which are transacted at Washington, do not approach to the magnitude or the importance of the affairs of the country, which are transacted elsewhere.

Meanwhile, in all these centers—Goshen, Akron, Fremont, Mentor, Burlington, Ann Arbor, Springfield, Syracuse, and a thousand others—are growing up men of affairs. On some fine day the country, in what seems a blind way, reaches out its hand to find a man who shall take the oversight of the National Administration. From one such place it picks out Abraham Lincoln; from another it picks out James Abram Garfield. Then you strike an attitude, and say: "Ah! these were exceptional men. Very extraordinary; but General Garfield read 'Horace.'" It is not extraordinary at all. The way in which the country is governed—not at a center, but in the places where the government is needed—gives you such men. You do not look for them merely in bureaus of central administration. You look for them, and you find them, wherever there has been government to administer, or other good work to be done.

E. E. HALE.